



SEP 26 2012

# The Philadelphia Inquirer

## Many Children With Autism Have Other Health Problems, Study Says

**Gastrointestinal trouble, heightened sensory responses found in about one-fourth of kids**

September 25, 2012

TUESDAY, Sept. 25 (HealthDay News) -- Many children with autism have interrelated health problems that can have a significant impact on their home and school lives, a new study finds.

Researchers looked at nearly 3,000 children with autism and found that nearly one-fourth also had chronic gastrointestinal problems such as constipation, abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea and nausea.

The children with the chronic gastrointestinal problems also had anxiety and so-called "atypical sensory responses," which are heightened reactions to light, sound or particular textures, according to the study, which was published recently in the *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*.

**"These problems can have a very real impact on daily life. Children with anxiety may be distressed or reluctant to engage in new activities, and those with sensory problems may have trouble paying attention or participating in overstimulating environments," Micah Mazurek, assistant professor of health psychology and a clinical child psychologist at the University of Missouri, said in a university news release. "These children may also suffer uncomfortable [gastrointestinal] problems that they may not be able to communicate about to adults."**

Effective management of these problems may improve autistic children's quality of life and response to treatment, she said.

"Parents need to be aware that these problems may underlie some of their children's difficulties, so if they notice any symptoms, they should talk to their doctors or therapists about treatment options," Mazurek said.

"Practitioners who work with children with [autism spectrum disorders] need to be mindful that there is a pretty high rate of these problems, so if children are treated for one issue, it may be helpful to screen for these additional symptoms," she added.

"Autism spectrum disorder" is a term for a group of developmental disorders with similar features, ranging from Asperger's syndrome at the mild end to full-blown autism. In general, it causes problems with social interaction and communication, and often is marked by obsessive and repetitive behaviors.

One in 88 children in the United States has been diagnosed with autism, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

# United Press International

100 YEARS OF JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE

## Following news, political knowledge linked

COLUMBIA, Mo., Sept. 25 (UPI) -- Following the news is one way Americans learn about politics but it is not sufficient, by itself, enough to create political knowledge, U.S. researchers say.

**A study at the University of Missouri School of Journalism found teens, especially, must think about and discuss with their peers what they read or watch on the news, to learn and understand political issues.**

Adolescents who spend more time thinking and talking about the news with their peers and relatives tend to know more about political developments in the country than those who simply follow the news, a university release said Tuesday.

News consumption does not directly lead to political knowledge, the researcher found. Instead, news consumption leads to thinking about the news, which then leads to engagement in discussions about the news, which finally ends with political learning.

"This is important because an individual's political identity begins long before one is eligible to vote," doctoral student Edson Tandoc said. "Our political identity is not shaped overnight and so it is important to start molding our future voters while they are still young.

"Our study shows that if parents and educators want to increase political knowledge and action among younger generations, it is important to involve them in discussions about what they are reading in the news," he said. "Just giving them a story to read is not enough. Teenagers need to be able to think through and talk about political issues in order to retain knowledge about them."

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# Cigarette tax increase

## Pros and cons of Proposition B

By Henry J. Waters III

Tuesday, September 25, 2012

In these pages Sunday, prospective voters were treated to a good published debate on the merits and demerits of the proposed state tax increase of 73 cents per pack of cigarettes that will appear on the Nov. 6 ballot as Proposition B.

Writing against the tax was Ron Leone, the executive director of the Missouri Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association. Leone's constituents are the largest retail sellers of tobacco products and enjoy a tax advantage over competitors in neighboring states. Missouri's 17-cent tax is the lowest in the nation, a fact Leone cites as an economic driver for the entire state. He says if the tax is increased, the state's middle class will foot most of the \$67 million hit in state and local revenue.

He objects to the use of a targeted tax on tobacco to fund unrelated programs such as health care and education and doubts as much money as promised will go to education, calling state use of earmarked funds a "shell game." Leone agrees education and health care deserve adequate funding and says his group would support a reasonable tobacco tax increase, but "Prop B's outrageous and unfair 760 percent tax increase is simply too big and too dangerous."

**The case for a "yes" vote is made by Michael Cooperstock, a professor of pediatrics at the University of Missouri. He concentrates on the health benefits of tobacco prevention and says the increase in the nation's lowest cigarette tax will "deter about 40,000 of today's Missouri children from becoming addicted smokers."**

Cooperstock does a compelling job of citing the danger of tobacco use. Without doubt, we would be healthier and live longer on average if we were smoke-free. In Missouri, he says, smoking "causes" about 1,800 low-birth-rate and premature babies per year. The Institute of Medicine estimates "the total lifetime medical and societal economic cost for 450 preterm infants in Missouri is more than \$100 million each year." He argues a "yes" vote is "a vote for the health and well-being of our children and our grandchildren, and it will improve education and lower health insurance costs for all."

Which of these arguments is most persuasive?

Start with a given. Smoking is unhealthy and leads to a lot of public and private health care expense. For our own good and the welfare of the nation, it would be better if people did not smoke or chew tobacco.

But it would be better if we didn't bad-mouth our neighbors or run red lights or eat so much fatty food. In an attempt to change bad habits, what is the role of government?

The libertarian in me favors Leone's argument against discriminatory taxing of a product like tobacco to arguably improve education or health. On this basis, there is no end to the improvement we could bring in these important areas if we simply levy a high enough cigarette tax.

And what to make of the argument that higher taxes will dissuade people from smoking? Is it the role of government to meddle in people's habits this way? If it is in the public interest to stop smoking, the straightforward method is government prohibition, an excessively intrusive role most people would oppose and one that would bring negative side effects such as black-market crime.

Many people want to smoke and drink whiskey and use narcotic drugs. What is the proper role of government in trying to force changes in these personal habits?

So-called "sin" taxes primarily become ordinary government revenue-raising tactics, not vehicles earmarked for doing public good. Government policy generally evolves into levying the highest taxes possible without unduly interfering with individual prerogative. We have found this balance most successfully with alcoholic beverages. We have not found it at all with narcotic drugs, remaining bogged down in the impropriety and ineffectiveness of prohibition. We are seeking the balancing point with tobacco.

So, Leone is right. The way to properly fund education and health care is with general public revenues. Since we are in the habit of taxing tobacco products to produce part of that revenue stream, the tax should be reasonable.

But Cooperstock also is accurate. A higher cigarette tax will deter some prospective first-time users. Even if imposing a high tax is a blunt and arguably inappropriate use of government power and will never solve the tobacco use problem, it will have a certain salutary effect.

Though it fails to give a clear answer, this nuanced analysis strikes me as the proper approach to the questions posed in Proposition B: Should we increase the tax on cigarettes? If so, how much?

The weakest part of Leone's argument is his contention that his convenience store group would be happy to see a reasonable increase in the tax. Of course, they prefer no increase at all, and one can understand why.

As a means of raising general revenue, taxing targeted products is a hallowed practice. When such taxes are earmarked for certain uses, the equation gets flaky, as with the myth that lottery revenues automatically produce increases in education funding. But proponents of targeted taxes

always find benefit in arguing a quid pro quo. Voters seldom get fervent in behalf of higher taxes for general revenue.

Prop B pushers have carefully chosen 73 cents per pack as their coveted increase, the largest amount they think they can pass and an amount leaving Missouri in the middle of the pack, so to speak, compared with other states.

Smokers are a minority these days. If they had good sense, they would quit or never start, but who are we in the nonsmoking majority to punish them by raising their tax, and is it proper to use the power of government to aim exclusively at those among us engaging in this legal practice?

I don't like the very idea of the Prop B tax, but when distilled to a question of raising general revenue, it can be warranted.

On the basis of the argument used in its support, the lonely, self-serving opposition put forth by Ron Leone and his convenience store tobacco merchants is correct.

But the state can use the revenue, the nation's lowest tax can afford an increase and, appropriately levied or not, a higher tax is bound to have a deterrent effect on smoking.

I will continue this argument with myself as the day of reckoning nears. For what it's worth, when I decide I'll let you know.

HJW III

No matter what business you're in, if you try to see how much you can give for a dollar instead of how little, you're bound to succeed.



## Author to speak at MU discussion on justice

By Janese Silvey

Tuesday, September 25, 2012

A best-selling author and Guardian contributor will join a Columbia panel on Thursday to discuss the treatment of various ethnic, religious and other groups under the American justice system.

Glenn Greenwald became a columnist for the Guardian this summer after writing for Salon magazine for five years. He's a former constitutional lawyer who also is the author of three books, including "With Liberty and Justice for Some: How the Law is used to Destroy Equality and Protect the Powerful."

**The event starts at 6 p.m. in Room 7 at Hulston Hall on the University of Missouri campus and is free and open to the public.**

The panel will include civil rights attorneys, representatives for the Latino and Islamic communities and a former police officer.

"I think it will be an evening in which individuals are challenged and in which we take a critical look at our justice system from a variety of perspectives," said David Mitchell, an associate law professor who helped organize the event. "We didn't want this to be viewed as being just about racial profiling or Muslim profiling but rather about the concept of what we are engaged in and what our justice system looks like and civil liberties look like across the board."

Greenwald, who lives in Brazil with his partner, has written two books critical of President George W. Bush, including "How Would a Patriot Act" published in 2006 about Bush's use of executive power.

More recently, Greenwald has consistently penned columns critical of President Barack Obama's foreign and domestic policies, recently writing that his presidency has "shredded laws and liberties."

"The sad reality is that there have been bipartisan efforts to subject people to injustice," said Jeff Stack of the Mid-Missouri Fellowship of Reconciliation.

He believes change is going to happen only when citizens begin discussing the inequities and what to do about them.

"It's vital for our society to be realistic about the lack of democracy and fairness in our country," Stack said. "We're expected to blindly give our pledge in terms of our nation being the greatest one on the planet and a great example of freedom and dignity for all. But the reality — and Glenn will be sharing this — is that for a very significant portion of our population, this is not the case."

# COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

## Journalist Glenn Greenwald will speak at MU on Thursday

By Sasu Siegelbaum

September 25, 2012 | 4:36 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — **Political journalist and bestselling author Glenn Greenwald will hold a keynote talk and panel discussion at the MU Law School at 6 p.m. Thursday in room 7 of Hulston Hall, on the corner of Ninth Street and Conley Road.** Greenwald is currently a columnist at The Guardian newspaper. He wrote for Salon.com and has also worked as a constitutional and civil rights litigator. He is the author of four bestselling books including:

- "How Would a Patriot Act? Defending American Values from a President Run Amok"
- "A Tragic Legacy: How a Good vs. Evil Mentality Destroyed the Bush Presidency"
- "Great American Hypocrites: Toppling the Big Myths of Republican Politics"
- "With Liberty and Justice for Some: How the Law Is Used to Destroy Equality and Protect the Powerful"

A book signing will be held at 5:30 p.m. and after the panel discussion. The discussion will focus on differential treatment of African-Americans, Latinos, Muslim-Americans, Middle Easterners, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities, political dissidents and immigrants in the U.S. justice system. Panelists will include:

- Eduardo Crespi, executive director for the Centro Latino and Comedor Popular in Columbia.
- Steve Downs, civil liberties attorney and executive director of the National Coalition to Protect Civil Freedoms.
- Amany Ragab Hacking, assistant clinical professor of law at St. Louis University and co-founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations.
- Redditt Hudson, former St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department officer and current program associate for Eastern Missouri American Civil Liberties Union.

The event will be free and open to the public.

# NASA astrophysicist to speak at MU about astronomy's past, present

By Alexis Hitt

September 25, 2012 | 5:37 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Although NASA recently canceled two missions to Mars, Gerald Fishman believes the agency's financial difficulties have been publicly overblown. After all, the rover Curiosity landed on Mars in August, and the James Webb Space Telescope is still in the works.

Fishman, senior astrophysicist at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, said it's still important for young people to study space. **Fishman will give a presentation on the history and current state of astronomy at 4 p.m. Thursday at Jesse Wrench Auditorium at MU.**

Fishman studies high-energy astrophysics, or objects beyond the solar system such as gamma-ray bursts, neutron stars and black holes, all of which will be discussed Thursday. Fishman said technological developments have allowed scientists to see those objects differently.

"Through optical telescopes, they seem fairly bland," he said. "But with X-ray telescopes, they are extremely bright, even brighter than the sun." Fishman earned his bachelor's degree in physics at MU in 1965. He continued his education at Rice University, where he received his master's and doctorate in space science. Though he thinks education is important, Fishman said it's harder now to get a job in his field.

"That doesn't mean you can't major in it and go in a related technical field," Fishman said. "It's still good training. I think once you graduate, you'd have to settle for a temporary situation until something more permanent comes along."

Exploration and curiosity will always be inherent qualities in humans, he said.

"We explored new lands on Earth," Fishman said. "We are beyond that now and exploring beyond the solar system to see what's out there."